BENGALURU, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2023 www.Bangaloremirror.com 16 Pages PRICE ₹4

Bangalore Mirror ON SATURDAY

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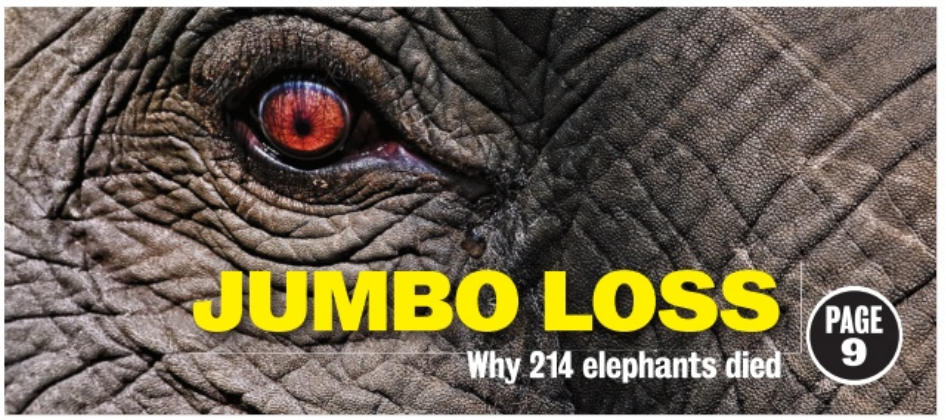

Team of Bengaluru researchers creates audio search engine to harness wealth of knowledge in colloquial Kannada language

SOUND GARDEN

State-of-the-art automatic speech recognition

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A team of research scholars, students and a professor from Bengaluru is attempting to bridge the knowledge gap in rural districts of Karnataka.

Their creation, the Graama-Kannada Audio Search, is an innovative audio search engine designed to provide easy access to valuable information for the residents in remote areas.

The project focuses on harnessing the wealth of knowledge embedded in colloquial audio content of the Kannada language.

Recognising the challenge of accessing oral information online, especially for communities with low literacy levels, the team devised a solution to empower them using the audio search engine. They got in touch with the organisation 'Namma Halli Radio' that had gathered an audio corpus of a few hours containing community interactions in colloquial language.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13 »

"Rural communities possess rich knowledge, often shared orally; this platform acts as a bridge to make that information accessible

— Aparna M, research scholar, IIIT

Blinding lights and deafening horns

Just 17 people in city booked for using high beam headlights in their vehicles

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With numerous complaints against the use of high beams, the city police have been cracking down on high beams but only a few have been caught. As per the latest statistics provided by the home department in the legislative assembly, 17 people in Bengaluru have been caught for using high beams in their vehicles.

In fact, the maximum caught for high beam usage is in Chikkamagaluru (397) and Mangaluru (37) while overall 1,096 have been booked for the same across Karnataka in 2023 (till November end).

According to the Motor Vehicles Act, the use of light bulbs exceeding 7 watts in headlights is prohibited, and modifying headlights is deemed illegal under Section 177 of the act, addressing improper headlight use.

Officials said that using very bright headlights is against the law, but many people still do it. The rules say you shouldn't use high beams in the city, but drivers often don't know or don't care. Not following these rules causes a lot of accidents, especially at night. Traffic expert MN Sreehari said,"Accidents caused by bright

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13 »

3 THINGS TO DO

01 Rhythmic love

Grab the opportunity to watch the rare ancient Indian traditional temple dance 'Navasandhi' this month in Namma Bengaluru. The art was presented by Guru Veena Murthy Vijay in 1981, and after 40 years, Dr Sangeetha Phanish is presenting this grand ritual again. This dance is considered highly sacred as it encapsulates the ritual of Ashtadigbandana. **Where: Chowdiah Memorial Hall; When: December 30; 4 pm**

02 Guitar tunes

This weekend, don't miss the chance to enjoy Bangalore Massive at one of the happening places in the city. The event is being presented by Drum and Bass India x Social. The artists lined up for performance are The Untitled One, Rasa, BLU b2b Hunnit D, Dwell b2b Hellkitty, Peach Blok, Skye, and more. **Where: Indiranagar SOCIAL, Plot 37, 80 Feet Rd, Hal, HAL 3rd Stage, New Tippasandra When: December 30; 7 pm onwards**

03 Jazzy night

Enjoy the Friday Tipsy Jazz evening with an enchanting performance by Gabe Diamond. He is an international guitarist from Hollywood, USA, who has been on tour for over ten years on the road in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, and Europe. **Where: The Drawing Room at Smoke House Deli, 1209, 100 Feet Road, HAL 2nd Stage, Indiranagar; When: December 29; 8pm onwards**

What's up with your current vax status?

State submits plea to Centre for Corbevax doses, which are expected to be delivered by first week of Jan; vaccines will be administered at district and major general hospitals

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In the covid-19 first cabinet sub-committee meeting held on December 26, it was stated that the other 30,000 doses of covid-19 vaccine will be procured for vaccinations as precautionary doses. The Health and Family Welfare department officials have revealed that a request for doses of Corbevax has been placed with the Government of India and is said to be received by the first week of January.

According to Dr Rajani Nageshrao, deputy director, Immunisation, Department of Health and Family Welfare, the vaccines will be administered at district hospitals and major general hospitals to eligible beneficiaries who have not received precautionary doses before to vulnerable groups, that is, elderly groups, immunocompromised people, and health care workers.

"Appropriate education activities will be taken up at districts to increase uptake of precaution doses; a due list will be generated from the Cowin portal; and the vulnerable beneficiaries will be reached out for vaccinations," said Dr Rajani. Last year, the government approved Corbevax as a precautionary dose for those over 18 years of age who were fully vaccinated with either Covishield or Covaxin. With the rise in covid cases and the number of positive cases of the JN.1 variant, the question of whether booster doses can be a game changer remains.

Dr Vishal Rao, Bengaluru-based oncologist and part of the Covid Genomic Surveillance Committee, GOK, said, "The race between vaccine updates and the virus's rapid evolution is ongoing. The vaccines developed and used in India used the D614G strain (Wuhan), which emerged in 2020, as a template. The virus has evolved in its genetic nature much beyond that. Thus, many counties have upgraded the vaccine to match the current strain's potency. We would still need to wait a few more months before we have these."

Until then, the global data currently available is reassuring that in patients who have been vaccinated and recently infected, the antibodies produced have been giving good immune protection against severe disease and death. Thus giving reassurance and avoiding the unnecessary panic button situation, he added. For those thinking of getting a fourth dose, Dr Rao pointed out that an Israeli study shows the fourth dose of vaccine was not found to be effective. "For those who have already received the third dose, it is not ideal to get the fourth dose, as it may not work for them and it won't be much of a game changer. Currently, Novavax, Pfizer, and Moderna are the upgraded vaccines. We still do not have it here, but that is not a sign and doesn't call for a panic button as proven public health measures are being carried out," he said.

> **"Appropriate education activities will be taken up at districts to increase uptake of precaution doses**
> – Dr Rajani Nageshrao, Deputy Director, Immunisation, HFW

Many private hospitals as well have started queries for covid vaccinations; however, they are waiting for government orders

Many private hospitals as well have started queries for covid vaccinations; however, they are waiting for government orders. "We had a committee meeting in the CEO office and discussed covid preparedness. At present, we are actively testing all the patients with covid symptoms and isolating patients with covid positivity. We have marked isolation ward beds and ICU beds for future patients. We have purchased medicines and consumables for the unexpectedly high number of covid cases. We have started getting queries for covid vaccination. We are awaiting government protocols for the vaccination process and will act accordingly," said Dr Chinnadurai, Lead Intensivist, Aster RV Hospital, JP Nagar.

K'taka witnesses increase in covid variant infections

Karnataka reported 173 new covid cases on Friday. Two new covid deaths were reported from Bengaluru. One of the covid deaths was of a vaccinated 59-year-old male with SARI who had diabetes mellitus. Another covid death was of an unvaccinated 69-year-old male with ILI who had comorbidities like hypertension, diabetes mellitus, and chronic kidney disease. Total covid-activated patients are 702. So far, 34 cases of JN.1 variant have been detected, and there are 18 cases of the XBB variant. Other variants constitute eight cases.

According to the INSACOG's data updated on Friday, a total of 162 cases of covid-19 sub-variant JN.1 have been detected in the country, with Kerala reporting the highest number of 83, followed by Gujarat's 34 cases. Several states have been reporting an uptick in the number of covid cases over the last few weeks, and nine states and union territories have so far detected the presence of the JN.1 sub-variant of the virus. The INSACOG's data showed 145 covid cases recorded in the country in December had the presence of JN.1, while 17 such cases were detected in November.

> **Two new covid deaths were reported from Bengaluru; one of the deaths was of an unvaccinated male**

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has classified JN.1 as a separate "variant of interest" given its rapidly-increasing spread, but said it poses a "low" global public health risk. The JN.1 sub-variant of the coronavirus was previously classified as a variant of interest (VOI) as part of the BA.2.86 sub-lineages, the parent lineage that is classified as a VOI, the world body said. However, in recent weeks, JN.1 cases have continued to be reported from multiple countries, and its prevalence has rapidly increased globally. The Centre has asked the states and union territories to maintain constant vigil amid an uptick in the number of covid cases and the detection of the JN.1 sub-variant in the country.

– BMB

'Let the New Year cheer last longer'

Hotel owners urge police to adopt Mumbai approach, permit businesses to stay open until 3 am on New Year

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The police have recently issued guidelines permitting hotels to stay open until 1 am on January 1. However, the city's hotel owners association is expressing dissatisfaction with this decision, urging the police to consider the Mumbai model, which allows establishments to operate until 3 am.

Numerous hotel owners have submitted petitions to the city police, asserting that the current closing time does not align with the typical commencement of New Year celebrations around 11:30 pm or 12 am.

They advocate for an extension, drawing inspiration from the Mumbai model, where revellers can continue enjoying until 4 am. In response, police sources are arguing that a further extension would pose logistical challenges, necessitating additional manpower to monitor and prevent any untoward incidents.

Krishna Raj, the owner of Nisarga Hotel, said, "We received guidelines to close by 1 am, but with many guests already possessing passes, it becomes challenging to request that they leave by midnight. Extending operating hours until 3 am would have been more practical. We are diligently following all the guidelines, including making masks mandatory for our guests."

Despite concerns, many hotels are reporting significant bookings. Bruhat Bengaluru Hotels Association president PC Rao said, "The New Year's Eve is a big business time. We estimate that the business on that night alone can be to the tune of Rs 600 crore. We need to know that we will follow all the guidelines, and there is no need to panic."

The government has repeatedly clarified that no new guidelines or restrictions will be imposed for New Year celebrations.

Meanwhile, the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) has announced special bus services operating from Brigade Road to various parts of the city between 11 pm and 2 am on New Year's Eve.

Additionally, the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has extended train services, with the last train departing at 01:30 am on January 1, running at a frequency of 15 minutes. It's important to note that MG Road metro station will be closed at 11 pm for public entry and exit.

> **"The New Year's Eve is a big business time. We estimate that the business on that night alone can be to the tune of Rs 600 crore. We need to know that we will follow all the guidelines, and there is no need to panic** -PC Rao

Commuters are advised to utilise Trinity and Cubbon Park stations instead. Return journeys after 11 pm from these stations will require the use of smart cards, NCMC cards, QR tickets, or paper tickets purchased in advance. Officials stress the importance of these measures to avoid overcrowding and inconvenience to fellow passengers during the extended New Year period.

Meanwhile, the BMTC has announced plans to operate buses, facilitating safe transportation for revellers on New Year's Eve.

These buses will be available from Brigade Road to various parts of the city between 11 pm and 2 am.

Specific routes include SBS1K to Kadugodi bus station, SBS13K to Kadugodi (via Hoodi), G2 to Sarjapur, G3 to Electronic City, G4 to Bannerghatta National Park, G6 to Kengeri KHB, G7 to Janapriya Township, G8 to Nelamangala, G9 to Yelahanka 5th stage, 610 to RK Hegde Nagar, G11 to Bagalur, and 317G to Hosakote. Additionally, buses will be operational from key bus stations such as Yelahanka, Indiranagar, Koramangala, Shantinagar, Banashankari, Sumanahalli, Goraguntepalya, Kadugodi, Nagasandra, Hebbal, and Central Silk Board.

Girl found dead in swimming pool

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A 10-year-old girl was found dead in a swimming pool at an apartment complex off the Varthur-Gunjur Road in city on Thursday evening. Residents of the apartment complex have staged a protest against the members of the apartment association for negligence, while the Varthur police have registered a case of unnatural death.

The deceased has been identified as Manya Damerla, a resident of the Prestige Lakeside Habitat apartment, studying in Class 4 at a private educational institution. Rajesh Kumar Damerla, the father of the deceased, is the founder and CEO of a digital content-creating platform known as Life Simplified.

The family resides in Tower 17 of the apartment complex.

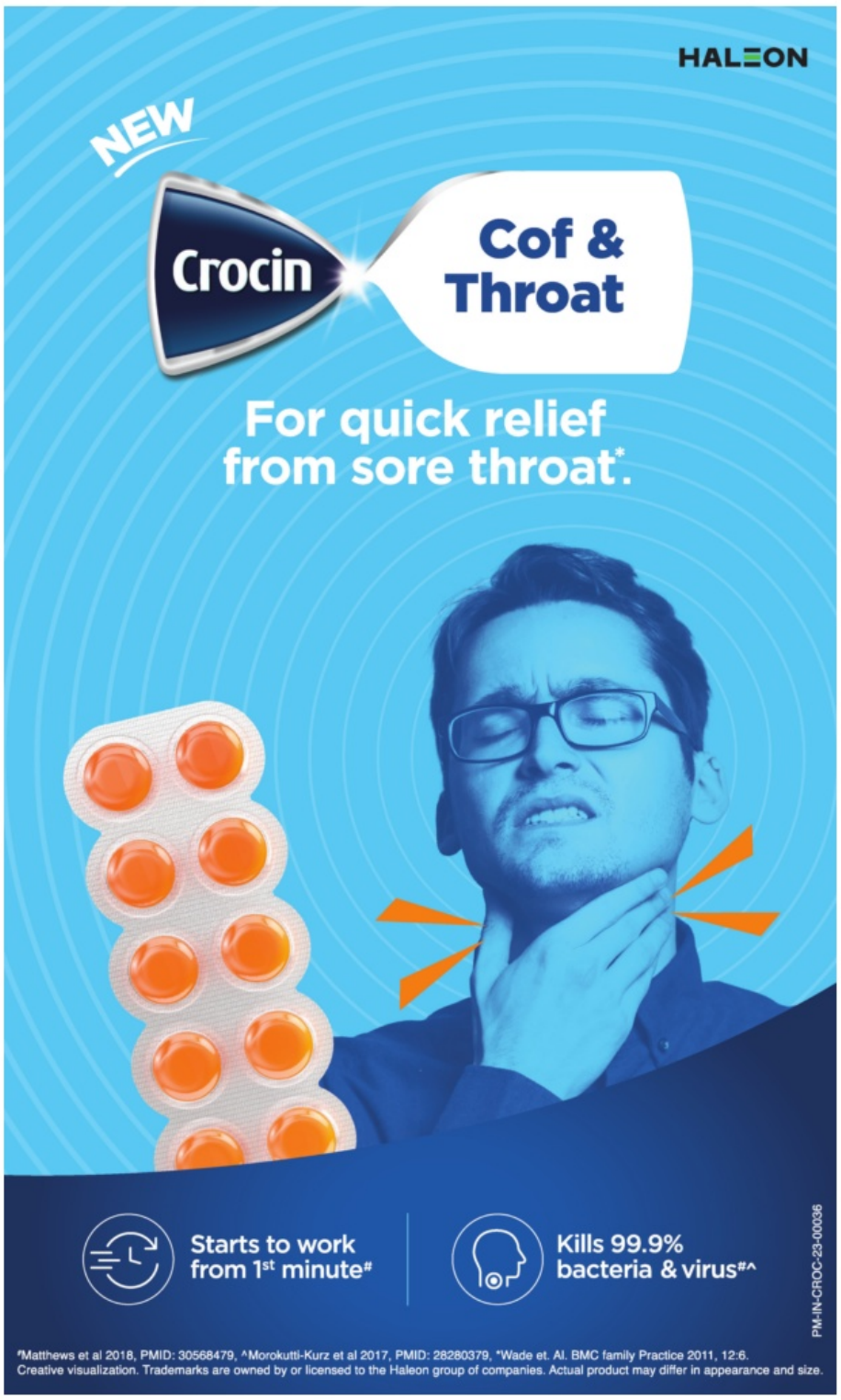
As per the police, Manya was playing around the swimming pool premises around 7:30 pm on Thursday when she fell into it and drowned. Rajesh was made aware of the incident only at 8 pm. Soon after, Manya was rushed to a nearby private hospital, where she was declared dead.

After speaking with residents, the cops have found that Manya may have suffered an electrocution after coming into contact with a live wire on the premises. Shivakumar Gunare, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP-Whitefield), said that the police are waiting on the post-mortem report to ascertain the cause of death.

Residents have noted that prior incidents of electric shocks have also been reported frequently to the apartment management. However, they allege that the root cause of the problem was never looked into while bandfixes were put in place, leading to such a dire situation.

The residents have staged a protest, demanding police action against the maintenance manager and others responsible for the death of the girl.

"We are in deep sorrow that our daughter has passed away. We want justice for our kid. She was playing with her other friends in the park, around the pool. Some of the kids have mentioned that they were playing in the open areas, and when they saw her, she suddenly fell into the pool and began to have shocks. Some people tried to help her with wooden sticks and chairs, but the damage had already happened. We have also come to know that the miniature circuit breaker (MCB) had to be turned off," said Rajesh Kumar Damerla.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RAJMOHAN SUDHAKAR

EVER CHANGING MOODS

Write to him at rajmohan.sudhakar@timesgroup.com

Floundering tech

The sooner the shadow of malice cast over tech's ambitious future plans lifts the better for the digital landscape and humanity's prospects in a rapidly transforming physical environment.

The big story of 2023, apart from the state-sponsored massacre of a people underway in the Middle East, is of tech floundering as its currency depreciates swiftly amidst a lack of humane innovation.

Artists, actors, authors, and the press, are suing AI firms for unauthorised use of their works and identities to 'train neural engines or large language models'. There goes the transparency that tech bestowed upon humanity. Or did it ever?

Firstly, tech steals intellectual property to train AI algorithms. Then it proclaims to the subscriber, who's excited to have just turned their chat-bot-authored college essay in, that the world has arrived at the next tech breakthrough.

It plans to woo the aspiring billion claiming they don't need artists/performers, novelists, filmmakers or even scientists anymore (pretty much all of society) because it has amassed their essence from the stolen data. Is it really the next tech breakthrough or a pastime of rich boys with tech toys?

Does the original idea and human endeavour cease to exist just like that?

In fact it is tech's final scramble to stop humanity's departure from it to the terribly missed old ways.

The sure-foot of 2010s big tech boom has lost its grip. A departure from the wired world is now considered therapeutic — immensely beneficial for the mind and body.

Before you know it, this return shall be mainstream, not just an aspect of vacay itineraries, finding one's lost identity in the deranged cacophony of the tech scape.

Anyhow, for the past decade, tech was riding social media providing marketing firms with loads of personal data amassed, diminishing advertising and making the rich richer and poor poorer.

Failed attempts at rebranding and rediscovering have exposed the lie tech has been selling seemingly in the already obsolete metaverse and NFTs. This perhaps explains the brutal lobbying around AI which even the tech-wary Europe finds hard to resist.

As tech barons feel threatened by the existential question that has arrived sooner than they thought, a death-scramble lobbying is unleashed to praise the benefits of AI in the press and how critical it is for humanity.

But pray tell us, especially the billion souls struggling to make ends meet in the global south, how?

Do the US-based AI firms decipher the sociocultural milieu of the east even though the naive east blindly follows western tech everywhere and oftentimes regret?

Fact is, 2023 was just another wretched year for tech where what has been on blatant display is the malice that hit a new high legitimising itself each passing year for over a decade. The irreverence and arrogance of the digital troll is now reflected in tech proprietors themselves as they believe they are above the law, regulation, jurisdiction, geography and could perpetrate any excess on humans.

If tech was indeed humanity's redemption song in this desolate landscape - in the aftermath of covid-19, wars waged by autocrats, and the fallout of the climate emergency - why engage malice and scar the sociocultural fabric in geographies that it seldom identifies with or even understands?

In the aforesaid raging 'wars' mounted by demagogues, now engaged by the press to polarise society and raise a global conflict of scale for political gain elsewhere, upheld by the world's most powerful nation, the US, where for perceived ethnicity and religious identity, children are slaughtered, tech has been caught aiding the oppressor.

This is not the first time tech has furthered ethnic violence and genocide — from spreading misinformation about the fleeing Rohingya of Myanmar or to the stateless Palestinians, it designs augmented realities and algorithms that take for granted large swathes that house diverse populations in the east, perpetuating savagery on millions of lives. And now it wants these excesses that no one takes responsibility for to be automated through AI? Absurd and dystopian indeed.

How can tech be trusted in the face of the harsh physical realities and pain rendered by mounting crises unleashed by errant climate when in the first instance it hoodwinks as seen in the series of instances of copyright violation in its hurry to train AI models?

Long story short: In the New York Times filing a copyright infringement lawsuit against OpenAI to emerging AI firms lobbying to water down regulation in Europe, or in mid-2023, Twitter's old boss Jack Dorsey accusing India of threatening to shut down the platform to its new boss Elon Musk then saying why platforms have to abide, or in news emerging now of Apple being told to hush up their story of state allegedly hacking into opposition politicians'/journalists' smart devices -- several instances now point to tech floundering on the internationalism it was built upon.

Troubled education

Protests over suicide; rap for dicey photo shoot

Student's parents accuse city college administration of harsh treatment; in Chintamani, teacher suspended for misbehaviour

Suspended from college, a first-year hotel management student died by suicide after allegedly consuming sleeping pills here, police said on Friday.

The incident occurred on Thursday at a PG in Chandra layout where Nikhil Suresh was staying with his friends, they said.

However, no suicide note was recovered from the spot.

"He was suspended about a month ago citing his behaviour, indiscipline and absence from college. Upset over this, he allegedly consumed some pills on Thursday which led to his death," a senior police officer said.

Demanding strict action against the college administration, his parents along with others staged a protest outside the college on Friday seeking justice for their son.

His family has alleged that after being suspended, he along with his mother approached the college authorities to appeal for his reinstatement. The victim apologised and sought another chance, but the management did not pay heed and refused to take him back. They also alleged that he was subjected to physical assault by the college authorities.

Asked about the allegations, the officer said, "We have not received any formal complaint but we are verifying the allegations and investigation is underway."

Romantic photo shoot goes viral

A 42-year-old headmistress of the Government High School, Murugamalla in Chintamani taluk of Chikkaballapur district, has been suspended for allegedly behaving inappropriately with a student during a recent school excursion, the officials said on Friday.

> **"He was suspended about a month ago citing his behaviour, indiscipline and absence from college. He is said to have been upset by this**
>
> –Police officer

A photo of a head teacher doing a romantic photo shoot with a student during a school trip went viral in the last two days.

In the photos, the student and headmistress are seen posing in various objectionable ways. The student is seen kissing her on the cheeks and pulling her saree. The student is also seen lifting the teacher in his arms.

The headmistress is also seen hugging and behaving romantically with the student in the video.

Following the video of the photo shoot going viral on social media on Thursday, Chintamani District Education Officer Umadevi visited the school and interrogated fellow teachers, students and kitchen staff who had gone on a trip.

Umadevi said the students and staff of the school went on an educational tour to Horanadu, Dharmasthala, Yana and other places from December 22 to 25, and the said incident allegedly took place then. "The photos that went viral were taken by another student. Barring the two students and the headmistress, no other staffer or student was aware of the incident," she added. As per BEO's recommendation, P Bailanjanappa, District Deputy Director of the School Education Department, has issued an order suspending her from service pending inquiry. **–Agencies**

Special court convicts Minister Bangarappa in cheque bounce case

A court here has convicted Karnataka Minister for School Education and Literacy Madhu Bangarappa in a cheque bounce case. The special court for cases involving MPs/MLAs directed him to pay a fine amount of Rs 6.96 crore to the complainant, Rajesh Exports, and the remaining Rs.10,000 to be appropriated to the State.

In case of failure to pay the amount, the Minister has to undergo 6 months simple imprisonment.

SB Madhu Chandra (S Madhu Bangarappa), as the director of Akash Audio-Video Pvt Ltd was the second accused in the complaint while Akash Audio-Video was the main accused. The XLII Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate

Court for cases involving MPs/MLAs also asks him to pay complainant over ₹6 crore as fine

Judge Preeth J of the special court in a recent judgement said, "Accused No.1 and 2 are convicted for the offence punishable under Section 138 of Negotiable Instruments Act and sentenced to pay fine of Rs 6,96,70,000, in default the Accused No.2 shall undergo Simple Imprisonment for a period of Six Months."

The Court in its judgement also reprimanded the attitude of the Minister for dragging the case.

"Though the Accused is an MLA holding a responsible position in the Karnataka State Legislature, from the order sheet of XV ACMM Court, it goes to show that the Accused was not secured before the said court and it went up to issuing proclamation also. This goes to show that the Accused is trying to drag on the proceedings to its heights and the same is deprecated," the judgement said.

According to the complainant, Akash Audio-Video had availed an inter-corporate deposit of Rs 6 crore from Rajesh Exports. A cheque was issued by Madhu Bangarappa for Rs.6.6 crore but it was dishonoured on November 27, 2011. Rajesh Exports then approached the court in 2012. The case was transferred to the special court in 2022. **–PTI**

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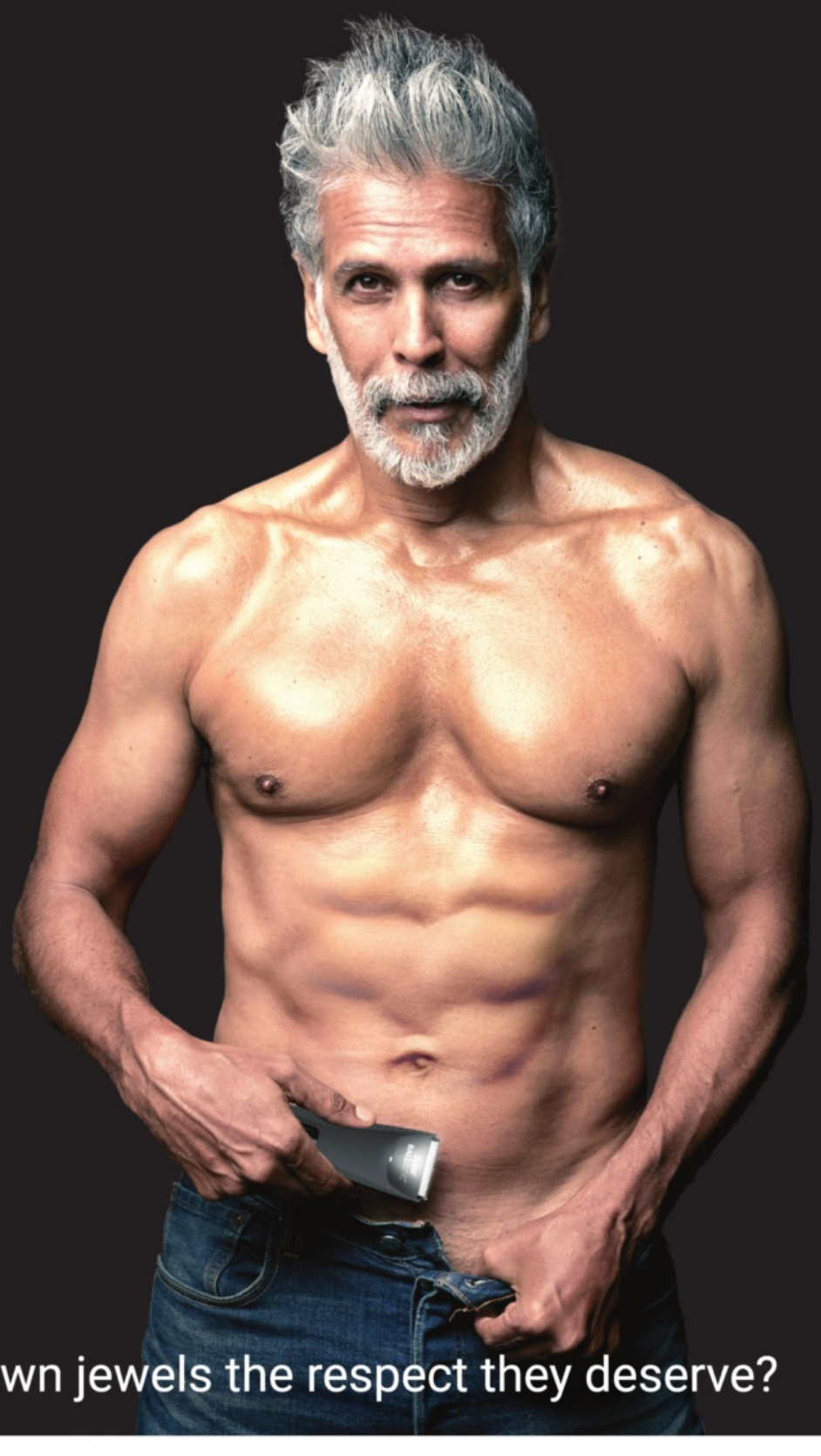

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Mysuru-Malavalli Road emerges as realty haven

From city stress to countryside calm: Bengalureans flock to Mysuru-Malavalli Road for farm retreats

The road from Mysuru to Malavalli is significant as it connects Bengaluru to Kollegal, Yellandur, and Chamarajanagar. It serves as a crucial route to pilgrimage sites and tourist spots like MM Hills and BR Hills. Recently, many people have been purchasing property in the area, staying on weekends, exploring nearby places, and then returning to Bengaluru. This trend has increased property purchases along the Mysuru-Malavalli Road.

The areas in and around Mysuru Road have become attractive due to various infrastructure projects. The road has metro connectivity, making it easier for residents to travel to the city and other areas. The NICE Road acts as a peripheral route, facilitating smooth travel to Tumakuru, Magadi, Mysuru, Bannerghatta, and Hosur roads. Many educational institutions have also emerged on the Mysuru road. The Mysuru-Bengaluru Expressway has boosted realty growth. People seeking affordable property options are now looking around Mysuru Road. It's a booming time for property buying, according to Vedprakash, a realtor.

Simultaneously, the Mysuru-Malavalli Road is becoming a preferred destination for building factories, plots, and even farm stays. People want to unwind and rejuvenate on their farmlands. Realtors say that the demand for farm lands has risen, with individuals actively seeking these parcels for family getaways amidst the peaceful countryside. Family holidays in farm stays are driving interest in acquiring agricultural land.

This trend reflects a desire to create retreats away from urban life, embracing organic farming practices. In Bengaluru, there's a preference for organic fruits and vegetables. Developers are not just selling farm lands; they're offering diverse options. Investing in farmland is seen as a profitable long-term venture. The growing interest in farmlands seems to be the future for property buyers, with more Bengalureans expressing a desire to own agricultural land and engage in part-time farming for personal sustenance.

Sowmya M, a resident of Bengaluru said, "I've been eyeing a piece of farmland along the serene Mysuru-Malavalli Road because, for me, it's not just about owning land; it's about finding solace amidst nature. The hustle and bustle of Bengaluru's fast-paced life can be overwhelming. Having a retreat away from the city, where I can reconnect with the simplicity of rural life, is my way of destressing from the demands of work. Imagine escaping to your piece of green heaven, where the air is fresh, and the surroundings are peaceful."

She further added that it is not just farmland; it's a sanctuary to unwind, rejuvenate, and escape the daily grind. "Tending to the land, embracing organic practices, and taking a break from the city chaos – it's therapeutic. This isn't just an investment; it's an investment in mental well-being. As more of us seek such escapes, I believe it could contribute to a collective reduction in stress levels, creating a healthier work-life balance for the people of Bengaluru," Soumya said.

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Bengaluru in top 7 cities to lead housing sales

Despite hardening property prices and home loan interest rate hikes in early 2023, it has been a strong year for the Indian residential real estate segment. Data put out by real estate consultancy firm Anarock showed that housing sales in the top seven cities in India have created a new peak in 2023, breaching the previous high of 2022. As many as 4.76 lakh units were sold in 2023 against 3,64,870 units in 2022 across the top cities - rising by 31 per cent on a year-on-year basis.

The last peak in the decade for the Indian residential real estate segment was seen in 2022, after 2014, when approx. 3.43 lakh units were sold in the top seven cities. The top seven cities, Delhi-National Capital Region, Mumbai region, Bengaluru, Pune, Hyderabad, Chennai, and Kolkata.

The greater Mumbai region, according to the Anarock data, witnessed the highest sales of approximately 1.53 lakh units in 2023, followed by Pune with about 86,680 units. The two western markets together led residential sales in 2023. Coming to new property launches across the top seven cities, they saw a 25 per cent annual rise - from approximately 3.57 lakh units in 2022 to 4.45 lakh units in 2023. Mumbai and Pune saw the most new launches, together comprising a nearly 54 per cent share of total new launches in the year, the real estate consultant said.

"2023 has been phenomenal for the Indian housing sector, despite global headwinds, rising domestic property prices, and interest rate hikes over the first half this year. Housing sales in the top 7 cities breached the previous high of 2022, and new launches stayed in step with the current housing demand," said Anuj Puri, Chairman, ANAROCK Group.

"It was widely expected that rising property prices and interest rates, along with global market upheavals and uncertainties, would impact residential sales," says Puri. "The market put paid to these predictions."

Demand is likely to remain undeterred in 2024, even with average prices likely to appreciate by 8-10 per cent across the top cities. The unchanged home loan rates in the second half of 2023 helped maintain the overall positive consumer sentiment, it noted.

"While housing price hikes over the year did give rise to demand concerns, the unchanged home loan rates helped keep sales on an even keel," said Puri.

The new luxury supply addition across the top 7 cities in 2023 has jumped up 5 times when compared to 2018. There is no reason to expect luxury housing demand to taper off in 2024, Anarock asserted. **ANI**

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₹1.73-crore revival has put life right back in lake

After years of neglect, Bidare Agrahara Lake's transformation into favoured hangout spot reflects successful CSR initiative, fosters community well-being

Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesgroup.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Bidare Agrahara Lake's transformation, which started in January 2023, is likely to be completed in the next two months

Residents of Bidare Agrahara and surrounding areas are very happy with the rejuvenation of Bidare Agrahara Lake. The residents consider the lake to be a destination for senior citizens and children to spend leisure time. They said the lake was once full of weeds and dirty water, but now it has become their favourite hangout spot. The lake's rejuvenation began in January 2023 and is expected to be completed in two months. The lake, spread across 16 acres and 9 guntas, is being rejuvenated at an estimated cost of Rs 1.73 crore as part of the corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative of Alstom.

The residents expressed their gratitude for the efforts made by the Chairman of Mahadevapura Task Force for Environment and the president of Force GW, Lingaraj Urs and Panchayat officials to rejuvenate the lake. Doddabanahalli Panchayat president Anil Kumar M stated that the lake was full of weeds and garbage, with few birds visiting, making it unsafe for residents. "I am very happy with the rejuvenation of the lake," said Anil Kumar.

Appreciating those responsible for the rejuvenation of the lake, Gaurav Srivastav, president, the Residents Welfare Association of Salarpuria Sattva East Crest, said that he has been residing at Bidare Agrahara for six years. "If the ongoing rejuvenation and developmental works at the lake are any indication, it seems that our money is being spent prudently. I visited the lake with my family on Thursday. There is a good ecosystem there with the flora and fauna increasing," said Gaurav Srivastav.

Bangalore Mirror
Rejuvenation kicks off at Bidare Agrahara

Bangalore Mirror's report on January 19 about the Bidare Agrahara Lake rejuvenation project commencing

> **"If the ongoing rejuvenation and developmental works at the lake are any indication, it seems that our money is being spent prudently**
>
> – Gaurav Srivastav, president, RWA, Salarpuria Sattva East Crest

Bangalore Mirror published a story titled "Rejuvenation Kicks Off at Bidare Agrahara" on January 19, narrating how residents, after years of neglect, were elated as the rejuvenation of their lake began. The residents expressed joy when their elected representative, Aravind Limbavali, and officials attended a function to commence the lake's rejuvenation. According to Urs, desilting and de-weeding, development of walking paths, bund improvement, and construction of an outlet are completed, and the fence work is in progress.

"This development will restore the biodiversity of the lake body and improve the groundwater table of the area within a radius of at least 2 km. Miyawaki forest and recreational facilities are also planned. We thank our partners, donors and the members and officers of the Panchayat for their support," said Urs.

Pro-Kannada protesters demand release of activists

Pro-Kannada activists staged a protest at Bengaluru's Freedom Park, demanding the immediate release of Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (KRV) activists detained by police. The protest was also attended by Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) workers. They demanded the immediate release of KRV State President TA Narayan Gowda. Earlier in the day, some protesters were released by the Bengaluru police and were given a grand welcome by the group. AAP leader Mukhyamantri Chandru claimed that the pro-Kannada fighters did nothing wrong and only did what the government should have done in the first place.

"What did pro-Kannada fighters do wrong? Robbed or murdered? Shop name boards in English and Hindi have been removed. Our pro-Kannada fighters have done what the government should have...If pro-Kannada fighters are not released, then we will teach the government a lesson in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections," Mukhyamantri Chandru said. Bengaluru Police, on Wednesday, detained KRV members, who staged a protest in Bengaluru demanding that all businesses and enterprises in Karnataka put up boards in Kannada at their shops and commercial establishments in keeping with the state's obligation that 60 per cent of them are in Kannada.

Kannada activists protest against state government and police for arresting Rakshana Vedike leader Narayan Gowda on Friday

The public awareness protest was held under the leadership of Karnataka Rakshana Vedike State President TA Narayan Gowda. It has also come to the fore that the KRV activists also vandalised shops that had signboards in English letters. The members of KRV also broke flower pots outside the Mall of Asia in Bangalore, broke signboards in English and sprayed black ink on them, officials said earlier. Deputy Chief Minister and State Congress Chief DK Shivakumar said on Thursday that everyone has a right to protest in a democracy but taking law into one's own hands can't be tolerated after pro-Kannada protesters went on a rampage in Bengaluru.

Speaking to reporters on Thursday, Shivakumar said, "In a democracy, everyone has the right to protest. We can't tolerate anyone taking the law into their hands. I am disturbed that they (pro-Kannada protesters) vandalised boards and establishments etc." – ANI

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Pothole peril
Kundalahalli

There are dangerous potholes at the main junction opposite Reliance Smart, Kundalahalli Gate.

Dangling cables
Doddagowdanapalya

The entrance to Doddagowdanapalya bus stand is risky, with a bunch of cables encircling a pole dangerously.

Uneven roads
Vasanth Nagar

Bikers frequently fall on the hazardous stretch of Ward 93 Vasanth Nagar Dr MH Ambarish Road, opposite Hotel Race View Road; urgent levelling and asphalt are needed.

Tusker trouble: K'taka reels under jumbo loss

Of 214 elephants that died due to various reasons in 2 years, almost 60% were bulls; wildlife experts stress on need for sex ratio monitoring and protection of males

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Between January 2021 and December 2023, Karnataka lost 214 elephants. Out of these, 41 died due to unnatural causes such as electrocution, train or road accidents, gunshots, and snares. As many as 33 of them (80 per cent) were males. Even when looking at the total deaths (214), nearly 60 per cent of them were bulls.

Elephant experts say that Asian elephants exhibit polygamous mating, and the demography of their population shows that males constitute only around 20 per cent of the population. Thus, more males being killed or captured would leave a dent in the population status, and measures must be taken to protect the bulls to ensure a healthy sex ratio.

"If more males are dying, the sex ratio will invariably tend to skew. In Asian elephants, adult males constitute nearly 20 per cent of the total population. While they gain sexual maturity roughly after the age of 18, social maturity, an important criterion to mate, develops only after the age of 25. Thus, if by and large, the elephants that are getting killed or captured are mostly socially mature males, it can lead to a population collapse. Although Asian elephants are a polygamous species, more males dying will have a detrimental impact on the demography," said Avinash Krishnan, a wildlife conservationist and director of science and conservation at A Rocha India.

> **"If more males are dying, the sex ratio will invariably tend to skew. In Asian elephants, adult males constitute nearly 20 per cent of the total population**
>
> – Avinash Krishnan, wildlife conservationist & director, A Rocha India

There is a need to keep a constant check on the sex ratio at a population or sub-population level, say wildlife conservationists. They opine that while the operational sex ratio in the elephant population can vary, the degree of difference between operational and observed sex ratio is a vital piece of information, given the rising conflict scenarios.

"Every protected area should have a database on the sex ratio of its elephant population. During the time of Veerappan, the sex ratio of elephants in Karnataka was 1:90. However, currently, there is no consistent database across all populations. While we know Bannerghatta has a healthy sex ratio of elephants, there is no data available on other reserves and protected areas. We do not know the total sample size of males in Karnataka. The degree of difference between operational and observed sex ratio should be made available for a better understanding of the situation," added Krishnan.

Experts say that since it is the bulls that have a higher propensity for conflict, decisions to capture them should be based on the consequences of such actions on the elephant population. They assert that male elephants need more protection and a monitoring protocol.

"Monitoring can be done through technologies such as radio telemetry or by mapping the distribution patterns of individuals. It will enable us to come up with better conservation guidelines for male elephants. We are losing a lot of male elephants not only in Karnataka but across the country," said a city-based conservationist.

According to Ramesh Belagere, a wildlife researcher at the Foundation of Ecology and Education Development, installing effective physical barriers on hard boundaries will help prevent the influx of elephants into human habitation, leading to a reduction in conflict cases and thus fewer bulls getting captured or killed.

"High-conflict areas should have physical barriers. While a change in crop patterns in farmlands abutting reserves and protected areas is suggested by some experts, it is neither viable nor long-term. It will not be financially operable to incentivise every farmer to move away from cash crops. Implementation of such schemes will also be difficult. Elephants are not venturing out due to a shortage of food inside the forests, and thus, the installation of barricades and their proper maintenance is the only long-term solution," said Belagere.

Owners of livestock hit road in protest

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Residents of Halanayakanahalli staged a protest on Friday against the government's decision to relocate the veterinary hospital that has been serving the needs of cattle, pet dogs, cats, rabbits, and chickens in around 20 surrounding villages. They brought livestock to the venue to express their anger. The protestors, holding placards, shouted slogans against the government's decision to relocate the veterinary hospital.

"There are around 2,000 cattle in our village. The data on the cattle units collected by the animal husbandry and veterinary sciences department is wrong. The closure of the veterinary hospital will be a big blow to the cattle owners not only in Halanayakanahalli but also in surrounding villages. We have decided to block Sarjapur Road by staging a protest near the Wipro office on Tuesday if the government fails to reconsider the decision to close the veterinary hospital," said Gaurav HS, a farmer.

Cattle owners staging a protest agaainst shifting of vet hospital at Halanayakanahalli on Friday

It may be recalled that the Under Secretary of the Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Department issued an order on December 15, stating that 27 veterinary hospitals and clinics in Bengaluru Urban District would be relocated to rural areas where there is a demand for them, as the cattle units are less than 1,300 under the jurisdiction of the 27 veterinary clinics in Bengaluru Urban District.

Demanding the government to reopen all 27 veterinary hospitals and resume work as it was before, as farmers and pet owners need them, Arun Prasad, an animal activist, said that animals are already suffering due to the closure of the hospitals. "The closure of veterinary hospitals amounts to cruelty against animals. I strongly condemn the anti-farmers stance taken by the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Sciences Department," said Arun Prasad.

Expressing concern over the closure of the veterinary hospital at Halanayakanahalli, N Geetha, who owns 10 cows, four dogs and 20 chickens, said that it would be a tough task to take cows to the hospital situated at Varthur for treatment. "There are more than 500 cows in this village apart from chickens, rabbits, and buffaloes. The veterinary hospital has been functioning here for 30 years. I demand the authorities concerned to reconsider their decision to relocate this veterinary hospital," said Geetha.

Expressing a similar opinion, HG Somasekhar, who owns 15 cows, 15 chickens, four dogs, 12 rabbits, and one cat, has said the transportation cost would be around Rs 2,000 for taking sick cattle to the veterinary hospital situated at Varthur. "It will be difficult for poor people who own cattle to bear the transportation cost. Another hurdle is heavy traffic on the road," said Somasekhar.

Appealing to the authorities not to shift the veterinary hospital, S Ramesh, a resident of Halanayakanahalli who owns 150 cows and 50 buffaloes, 1,000 chickens, and around 500 goats and sheep, said that the veterinary hospital has been a boon for the cattle owners all these years.

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORYBEHINDTHEPHOTO

SUN SOAKED

A few coracles soaked the sun before continuing the daily journey of sustaining livelihoods at Hogenakkal Falls

The picture was clicked by BM reader **Hanish Sharma**

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesgroup.com**

DID YOU KNOW?

Divya Spandana, popularly known as Ramya, is an actress and former Member of Parliament from the district of Mandya. She was born in Bengaluru. She has been known for her work in various Indian film industries. She also received two Filmfare Awards South, a Karnataka State Film Award, and more. Her debut movie was in the film Abhi, which was a Kannada film and was released in 2003. She joined the Indian National Congress in 2012. Later, she won the election in 2013.

GET HEARD WITH MIRROR

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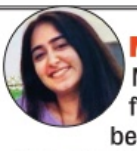
Let's see how much you know about Namma Bengaluru, folks. Tell us something incredible and mind-boggling about this beautiful city and our editors and researchers will check it out. If it's credible, we'll give it a shout-out, with your name and picture.

TAPTHECHATTER

where Bengalureans speak their mind

What are the biggest challenges Bengaluru faces in terms of infrastructure and public services?



Maheep, BM Reader
Many times, my friends and I face problems booking autos. It's becoming one of the most persistent issues in Bengaluru, where cab and auto drivers cancel the ride. Also, a lot of the time, they try to charge extra.

Mausam, BM Reader
Ever since I moved here, I have noticed that the roads are not maintained properly, and the problem of potholes increases, especially in monsoon season. The authorities concerned must do something about it.

Surbhi, BM Reader
The city is notorious for its traffic congestion, which has a severe impact on commuting times and air quality. The rapid increase in vehicles on the road is a major challenge. Public transportation should be made more accessible to the public.

Anuj Sethi, BM Reader
I think there are problems related to traffic and garbage disposal. There should be waste bins put at every location in the city so that citizens can have easy access to them.

Tanishka, BM Reader
I think traffic management is the only problem I feel is more evident. Traffic congestion leads to an unpredictable travel time to reach our destinations. The issue is the increase in private vehicles on the roads.

Ananya, BM Reader
I think everyone will agree with me that traffic is the biggest problem here in Bengaluru. The government should focus on improving it.

SPEAK TO US

Tell us what your New Year's resolution is?

If you want to be featured in this section, mail us your answer to this question, in 25 words, with 'Tap The Chatter' in the subject line. Mail us with your name, occupation & a picture at mybangaloremirror@timesgroup.com or WhatsApp us on 9591233247

Heal in comfort

NIMHANS introduces two-storey Vishram Sadan to offer sanctuary for attendants of patients seeking treatment there

Vishram Sadan has been constructed by Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID)

The National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) marked an occasion with the inauguration of the two-storey POWERGRID Vishram Sadan, which will provide boarding facilities for the attendants of NIMHANS patients in Bengaluru. It was constructed by Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) under its CSR initiative. Cabinet Minister of Power and New and Renewable Energy, Government of India, RK Singh, and Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare and Chemicals and Fertilisers, inaugurated the POWERGRID Vishram Sadan on Thursday at the NIMHANS Campus.

The POWERGRID Vishram Sadan, with a sanctioned cost of Rs 23 crore, stands as a testament to the collaborative efforts to provide a haven for economically disadvantaged patients and their attendants coming to NIMHANS for treatment. This initiative addresses the challenges faced by those waiting for or undergoing long-term treatment by providing boarding and lodging facilities in a clean and sanitised environment at nominal charges.

The Vishram Sadan boasts reception, help desk, lounge, nine rooms with six beds each, separate toilets for male, female

The Vishram Sadan, spanning basement, ground, and two floors and covering an area of 6,630 sq m, boasts a reception, a help desk, a lounge, nine rooms with six beds each, separate toilets for male, female, and divyangjan, and a kitchen and dining hall—all fully furnished, totaling 55 rooms with a capacity of 270 beds, thereby providing the maximum possible comfort to the attendants of the patients. Dr Mansukh Mandaviya appreciated POWERGRID Corporation for its generous CSR contribution, highlighting the positive impact on hospitals and patient amenities. He also commended NIMHANS for its high-quality patient care, especially during the challenging times of the covid pandemic.

POWERGRID has built similar Vishram Sadans at AIIMS, New Delhi, IGIMS, Patna, DMCH Darbhanga, KGMU, Lucknow, Guwahati, and Vadodara for the benefit of the masses. Such Vishram Sadans are also being constructed by POWERGRID at Ranchi and Jhansi. **— BMB**

HEALTH TIP: Components in cumin like cumin aldehyde, thymol and phosphorus serve as good detoxifying agents

High in calories and carbohydrates, bananas provide energy for weight gain

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Saturday, December 30, 2023
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All you need to know about...

Dangers of table salt

Risk to kidney
Love to add more salt to your food at the table? Beware, it may increase the risk of chronic kidney disease (CKD), warned a study.
The risk was more pronounced among people with a higher estimated glomerular filtration rate -- indicator of kidney function -- and lower body mass index or physical activity level.

Salty preference
The study, which involved 465,288 participants, showed that a higher self-reported frequency of adding salt to foods -- a common eating behaviour shaped by a person's long-term preference for salty taste in foods and habitual salt intake -- was significantly associated with an increased risk of CKD.

Smokers or diabetics
In the paper, published in JAMA Network, the team found that people who added salt to their foods were also more likely than those who did not add salt to their foods to be current smokers and have diabetes or CVD at baseline.

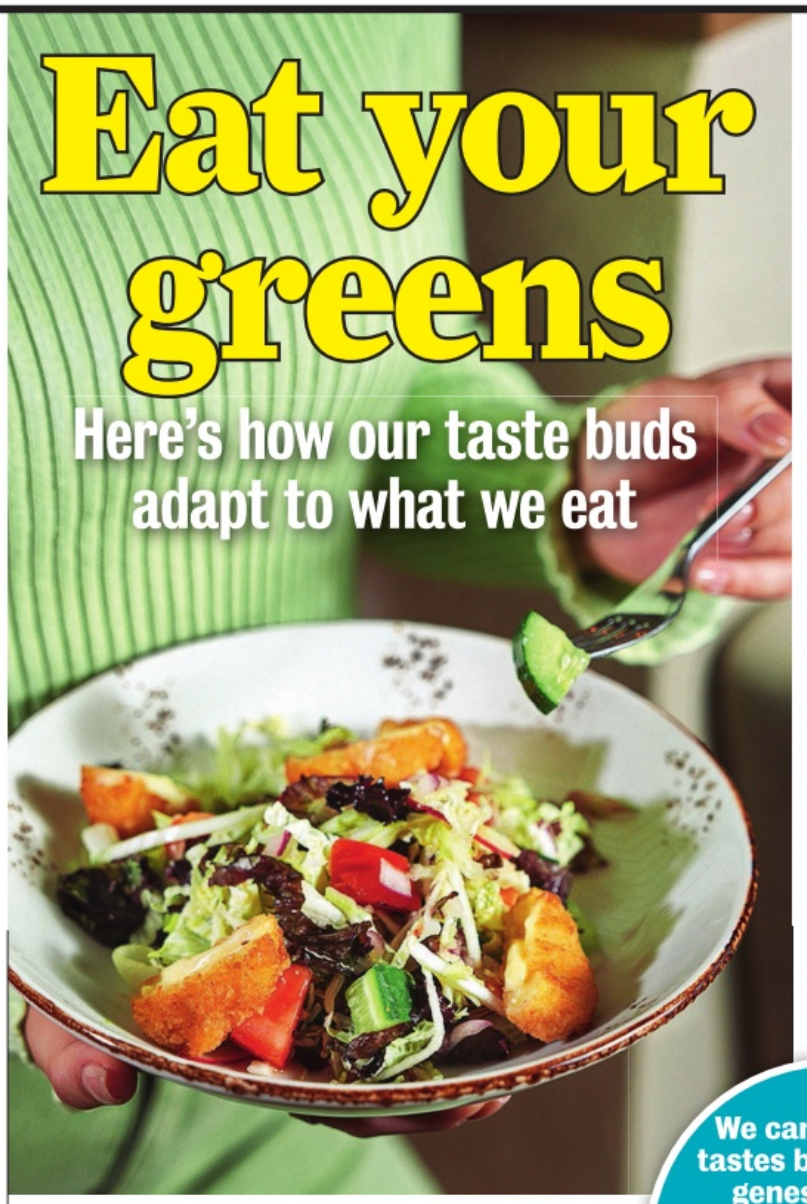
Strategy to lower risk
"The findings suggest that reducing the frequency of adding salt to foods at the table might be a valuable strategy to lower CKD risk in the general population," Rui Tang, from the Department of Epidemiology at Tulane University in the US.

Physical activity helps
The team also observed the association of sodium intake with CKD was lessened in participants with regular physical activity compared with those who were less physically active, suggesting optimal physical activity might lower the adverse association of high preference for salt with CKD. This finding is supported by prior studies that reported increased physical activity was associated with better CKD outcomes, the researchers said.

-IANS

Eat your greens

Here's how our taste buds adapt to what we eat



Do you hate salad? It's OK if you do, there are plenty of foods in the world, and lots of different ways to prepare them.

But given that almost all of us don't eat enough vegetables, even though most of us (81%) know eating more vegetables is a simple way to improve our health, you might want to try.

If this idea makes you miserable, fear not, with time and a little effort you can make friends with salad.

Why don't I like salads?

It's an unfortunate quirk of evolution that vegetables are so good for us but they aren't all immediately tasty to all of us. We have evolved to enjoy the sweet or umami (savoury) taste of higher energy foods, because starvation is a more immediate risk than long-term health.

Vegetables aren't particularly high energy but they are jam-packed with dietary fibre, vitamins and minerals, and health-promoting compounds called bioactives.

Those bioactives are part of the reason vegetables taste bitter. Plant bioactives, also called phytonutrients, are made by plants to protect themselves against environmental stress and predators. The very things that make plant foods bitter, are the things that make them good for us.

Unfortunately, bitter taste evolved to protect us from poisons, and possibly from over-eating one single plant food. So in a way, plant foods can taste like poison.

For some of us, this bitter sensing is particularly acute, and for others it isn't so bad.

This is partly due to our genes. Humans have at least 25 different receptors that detect bitterness, and we each have our own genetic combinations. So some people really, really taste some bitter compounds while others can barely detect them.

This means we don't all have the same starting point when it comes to interacting with salads and veggies. So be patient with yourself. But the steps toward learning to like salads and veggies are the same regardless of your starting point.

It takes time

We can train our tastes because our genes and our receptors aren't the end of the story. Repeat exposures to bitter foods can help us adapt over time.

Repeat exposures help our brain learn that bitter vegetables aren't posions.

And as we change what we eat, the enzymes and other proteins in our saliva change too.

This changes how different compounds in food are broken down and detected by our taste buds. How exactly this works isn't clear, but it's similar to other behavioural cognitive training.

Add masking ingredients

The good news is we can use lots of great strategies to mask the bitterness of vegetables, and this positively reinforces our taste training.

Salt and fat can reduce the perception of bitterness, so adding seasoning and dressing can help make salads taste better instantly. You are probably thinking, "but don't we need to reduce our salt and fat intake?" – yes, but you will get more nutritional bang-for-buck by reducing those in discretionary foods like cakes, biscuits, chips and desserts, not by trying to avoid them with your vegetables.

Adding heat with chillies or pepper can also help by acting as a decoy to the bitterness. Adding fruits to salads adds sweetness and juiciness, this can help improve the overall flavour and texture balance, increasing enjoyment.

Pairing foods you are learning to like with foods you already like can also help.

The options for salads are almost endless, if you don't like the standard garden salad you were raised on, that's OK, keep experimenting.

Experimenting with texture (for example chopping vegetables smaller or chunkier) can also help in finding your salad loves.

Challenge your biases

Challenging your biases can also help the salad situation. A phenomenon called the "unhealthy-tasty intuition" makes us assume tasty foods aren't good for us, and that healthy foods will taste bad. Shaking that assumption off can help you enjoy your vegetables more.

When researchers labelled vegetables with taste-focused labels, priming subjects for an enjoyable taste, they were more likely to enjoy them compared to when they were told how healthy they were.

> **We can train our tastes because our genes and our receptors aren't the end of the story. Repeat exposures to bitter foods can help us adapt over time**

The bottom line

Vegetables are good for us, but we need to be patient and kind with ourselves when we start trying to eat more.

Try working with biology and the brain, and not against them.

And hold back from judging yourself or other people if they don't like the salads you do. We are all on a different point of our taste-training journey.

(By Emma Beckett, University of Newcastle, The Conversation)

MIRRORLIGHTS

Benzodiazepine linked with increased miscarriage risk

Use of benzodiazepine, a widely used drug to treat anxiety and insomnia, during pregnancy is associated with a higher risk of miscarriage, according to a study.
The researchers from the National Taiwan University and colleagues quantified the risk for miscarriage associated with benzodiazepine use during pregnancy in a nationwide, population-based case-time-control study in Taiwan.
Pregnancies resulting in miscarriage between 2004 and 2018 were included in the case group and matched in a 1:1 ratio with control individuals.
The study, published in the journal JAMA Psychiatry, included 3,067,122 (over 30 lakh) pregnancies among 1,957,601 (over 19 lakh) women. It was found that 4.4 per cent of these pregnancies resulted in miscarriage.
Miscarriage was defined as any pregnancy loss occurring between the first prenatal care visit, usually eight weeks of conceiving, and the 19th completed week of pregnancy.
The researchers found that the risk for miscarriage was increased in association with use of benzodiazepines during pregnancy.
"This study revealed an increased risk of miscarriage associated with benzodiazepine use during pregnancy after accounting for measurable confounders," the authors of the study noted.

-PTI

Amid internal feud, BJP state chief Vijayendra to visit Yatnal's hometown

Amid the faceoff, Karnataka BJP President BY Vijayendra is visiting Vijayapura city, the hometown of rebel BJP MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal, on Saturday. However, Yatnal is snubbing Vijayendra openly and challenging him causing major embarrassment to the party in the state.

MLA Yatnal had dropped a bombshell by stating that if he is sacked from BJP for his remarks, he would expose Rs 40,000 crore scam by Vijayendra's father, former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa during Covid pandemic. Vijayendra is visiting Vijayapura for the first time after assuming the charge. He will visit the district BJP office and hold a meeting with local leaders. He will also visit Sri Siddeshwar Ashram in the city and participate in the Guru Namana programme.

MLA Yatnal had refused Vijayendra to visit his residence. He also snubbed him on many occasions inside as well as outside the assembly. Former Chief Minister D.V. Sadananda Gowda had expressed his unhappiness over no initiation of action against those who are openly challenging the leadership in the state.

Sources explain that MLA Yatnal is backed by the National General Secretary (Organization) BL Santhosh and opponents of Yediyurappa. The sources said that the development of Vijayendra visiting MLA Yatnal's home town will compel the latter to welcome him as per the protocol.

The development has created curiosity in the state politics. **IANS**

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personal

CHANGE OF NAME

CHANGE OF NAME

I SADASHIVA V. S/o Venkatesha Bhatta .K.V R/o SLN Temple, Vivekananda Road, Tumkur, stating that my name mentioned as Sadashiva Bhatt .V in Aadhar card/Voter ID card. But my name mentioned as Sadashiva .V in all documents. So I do hereby declare that my name **correct name is SADASHIVA V.** All the above information is correct and true. Therefore, I have filed an affidavit before Notary and Lawyer T.N.Bharathi, Tumkur on 29.12.2023.

I, Shivanand V Machappanavar S/o. Venkappa Machappanavar aged about 45 Years, Residing at No 74. Arakeri, Near Panchayat Office, Arakeri, Tq: Bilagi. Dist: Bagalkot, Pincode - 587116. I have changed my old names from SHIVANAND V MACHAPPANAVAR and SHIVANAND to new name 'SHIVANAND VENKAPPA MACHAPPANAVAR' vide affidavit 27-12-2023 Sworn before Advocate and Notary Smt. A Manjula, (Regd No 13250), Bangalore for all official and legal purposes, particularly for PASSPORT.

I, SRUTHY S M alias SRUTHY SOBHANA MOHANAKUMAR UNNI, D/o Mohanakumar Unni, R/o E-401, Bren Woods Apartment, Doddanagamangala, Electronic City Phase 2 Bengaluru-560100, have changed my name as SRUTHY SOBHANA, vide affidavit dated 28.12.2023, sworn before notary S. Subashini, Bengaluru.

I, GURURAJ JADAR, S/o Nanappa Jadar, R/o #328 Sauvity Amulya Apts, Huskur Gate, Kammasandra Village Road, Meenakshi Layout Electronic City, Bengaluru - 560100, have changed my name as GURURAJ N JADAR, vide affidavit dated 28.12.2023 sworn before notary S. Subashini, Bengaluru.

I, Ashwin Gajananrao Mohadikar, S/o. Gajananrao Mohadikar, C3-1103, SNN Raj Serenity, Begur-Koppa Rd, Yelenahalli (V), Blr-560068, have changed my minor son's name from Sparsh Ashwin Mohadikar to SPARSH MOHADIKAR vide affidavit Dtd: 16/12/23 sworn before Notary Dharani P., B'lore.

I, MUSKAN BANU SADIQ PASHA, W/o, Mohammed Owias, Residing at, No.40/3, 1st Main, 1st Cross, NG Palya, Near Mother Theresa School, New Gurappan Palya, Bengaluru-560029, have changed my name to MUSKAN BANU, vide Affidavit dated: 29-12-2023, sworn before Notary, V. Rajashekhara, Bangalore.

I, SRILAKSHMI. S, D/o, Srinivas. Y.S., Residing at, 27/1, 4th Cross, 2nd Main Road, Govindaraj Nagara, Bengaluru-560040, have changed my name to SHANVI. S, vide Affidavit dated : 29-12-2023, sworn before Notary, V. Rajashekhara, Bangalore.

I Magesh Balraj Ramachandran R/o Site No 74, 1st Cross Guru Reddy Layout, Near PWD Rd, B Narayanapura Bengaluru-560016 have changed my name to Magesh Balaraj for all Purposes.

I Rishit Yegyasubramaniam Iyer S/O, Yegyasubramaniam Balasubramaniam Iyer R/o B3 304, Mahaveer Ranches Apartment, Hosa Road, Bangalore 560100 have changed my name to Rishit Iyer.

I Harin Deepak Sarda R/o A-501, Shriram samruddhi apts, varthur main road, Bangalore - 66 have changed my minor daughter name from Misha Harin Sarda to Misha Sarda for all purposes.

I, Zaheer Ahamed Sheriff, S/o. Abdul Subhan, R/o: #75/1, Bazaar Street, Neelasandra, Vivek Nagar, Blr-47, have changed my name to ZAHEER AHMED SHARIFF for all purposes.

I, Khushi R/o No 9, Ground Floor, 1st Main Kaveri Layout, Nagarabhavi Main Road, Bengaluru-560040 have changed my name Khushi Mallappa Punjapagol

I, Bindu George Age 55 yrs, 66, Prestige Glenmogan, Whitefield, Bangalore 560066 has changed my spouse name from K George Davice to K Geoge Davis.

I, Hemant s/o Sathish Balasubramanian R/o No-118Q Reliaable Lifestyle Layout, Haralur, B'luru-560102 have Changed my name to Hemant Sathish for all Purposes.

I, Ramesh Kumar R/o Meera Kunj, No 548, 63rd Cross, 5th Block Rajajinagar Bangalore 560010 have changed my minor son's name from Daiwik to Daiwik Suman .

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Skeletons of five people found in Chitradurga house

The skeletons of at least five people were found in a house on Bengaluru Road in Chitradurga district, police said on Friday.

The skeletons were found within the Chitradurga Extension Police Station limits in Adhisakti Nagar.

State Home Minister G Parameshwara told reporters that he has asked police to carry out an investigation into the incident.

"I have spoken to the SP, IG and other senior officers regarding the incident. I have asked to investigate as to how long they have been there and who they are. It is said that one of their relatives was an executive engineer. I have asked to investigate it...,"he said.

Locals and relatives claimed the family used to live a completely secluded life as they were facing critical health issues. The family was last seen in June-July 2019.

Their house was always locked. Around 2 months ago, the main wooden door was seen broken during the morning walk, but police weren't informed.

According to the police, the scene of the crime suggests that the house has been intruded on multiple times and ransacked.

Four skeletons (2 on beds and 2 on the floor) have been found in the sleeping position inside a room, while another one is found in another room, as per police.

A Forensic Science Laboratory team from Devengere and a scene of crime officer (SOCOs) were called to the spot to collect evidence.

According to the people known to the family, including their relatives, prima facie, the skeletons are suspected to be of Jagannath Reddy, retired executive engineer (85); Prema, wife of Jagannath Reddy (80); Trivedi, daughter (62); Krishna alias Babu Reddy, son (60); and Narendra Reddy, son (57).

"The identity of the deceased can be ascertained only after forensic reports and a postmortem in the matter," police said, adding that further investigation is going on. **ANI**

Woman cop's CDR leak: FIR lodged against blackmailer

#Kalaburagi

Police on Friday lodged an FIR against the blackmailer in connection with a case in which the Call Detail Record (CDR) of a policeman was leaked, raising a concern in the state.

The FIR has been registered with Kalaburagi City Cyber Crime police station against one Mahesh Sangavi from Kalaburagi, who is wanted by the police.

According to police, the accused got himself introduced to the victim cop while she worked with Ashoknagar police station in Kalaburagi city.

He got her number and used to chat with her. After getting transferred to R.G. Nagar police station, she got to know about the criminal background of the accused and distanced herself from the accused.

The accused started demanding money from the woman and threatened that he would make their private photos and videos viral on social media. The woman officer had slapped and shooed him away. In spite of this, the accused was harassing the woman officer to marry him, the police said.

She had rejected his proposals and got engaged with another policeman. The accused obtained CDR details of the woman and sent it to her fiance and the marriage was called off. The victim also mentioned in the complaint that the accused had extorted Rs 1.5 lakh from her.

The victim officer filed a complaint with Police Commissioner of Kalaburagi city, R. Chetan Kumar, demanding action against the culprits for 'mentally torturing' and 'violating' her privacy.

The case was investigated by DCP Kanika Sikriwal, who was directed to handle the case with the utmost seriousness and submit the report on a priority basis. This development had raised concerns as it involved the violation of privacy of an individual.

Earlier, two police head constables including a woman officer were suspended for leaking the CDR details of the woman.

Following the report, Police Commissioner Chetan Kumar had issued an order suspending Tukaram, a head constable attached to Kalaburagi Women's Police Station and Veda Ratna, also a head constable attached to the Station Bazar police station.

The accused head constables had taken out the CDR and sold it. The CDR was given to the fiance of the woman police officer following which, the marriage was called off.

The incident of the woman police officer's CDR leakage by her fellow officers had come to light on December 22 in Kalaburagi city. **IANS**

City police book just 17 cases against high beams

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

headlights don't get reported much. We need to tell people more about this issue and also use new technology to punish drivers who break the rules.

The law says the light bulbs in headlights shouldn't be too strong, and changing headlights is also against the law. The traffic police should stop cars with bright headlights because they blind other drivers and cause more accidents."

M Bhargavi, a techie said: "Some drivers say they use strong lights because there aren't enough streetlights in the city. Streetlights are not everywhere, so using bright lights is the only way to see the road for many drivers. Powerful lights are necessary, especially when there are no lights on the road back home, as in the case of one person who chose bright lights after having an accident."

However, Bengalureans who are modifying their factory fitted headlights argue that they are forced to do so due to lots of potholes and poor lighting.

A mechanic said: "Drivers are changing their car lights to make them brighter. Everyday we are getting queries from drivers who want powerful lights because there are many accidents, especially at night when people can't see potholes. Even though we are trying to convince them that it is not feasible, they still want it to be modified and there are a few mechanics who end up changing the lights."

Loud horns

In the meantime, authorities in Bengaluru registered 178 cases for the use of loud horns. In total, 3,523 cases have been filed for the use of 'unauthorised horns.'

Notably, there is a higher incidence of cases reported in other cities such as Chikkamagaluru (488), Udupi (398), and Mangaluru (787). Law enforcement officials clarified that cases are filed and shrill horns are confiscated if their sound levels exceed 65 decibels.

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Date:
22nd Dec 2023 to 31st Dec 2023
Timings: 11:00 AM to 7:00 PM
(10 Days Exhibition)
Arts | Handicraft | Clothings
Fashion Accessories | Home Decor & More
Venue:
Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath,
Kumara Krupa Road, Bengaluru
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9036658774
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What is Graama-Kannada Audio Search?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Team members who worked on the project were Srinath Srinivasa (professor and dean (R&D), Web Science Lab, IIIT-Bangalore), Sharath Srivatsa (PhD scholar, Web Science Lab, IIIT Bangalore), Aparna M (MS by research scholar, Web Science Lab, IIIT Bangalore), Sai Madhavan G (iMTECH student, IIIT Bangalore) and TB Dinesh (IruWay Rural Research Lab, Janastu)

Aparna M said: "Rural communities possess rich knowledge, often shared orally, and this platform acts as a bridge to make that information easily accessible. In this work, we fine-tune state-of-the-art Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) models using limited audio data to reduce the Word Error Rate (WER) for colloquial audio data to acquire transcripts for the audio, followed by creating an interface to search for keywords using simple fuzzy matching technique for n-gram inputs."

The team even reached out to the Tumakuru village, showcased the audio search engine features and their function on how it works. The villagers, they said, found it very interesting and provided their feedback.

Aparna further added: "We propose an architecture for oral knowledge management for rural communities speaking colloquial Kannada. The proposed architecture has an interface for oral knowledge retrieval using text processing on transcripts generated from the ASR model.

The architecture includes a n-gram based fuzzy search to search for texts in audio, the most frequent entities search based on a Kannada Named Entity Recognition (NER) model, and a question-answering with a Large Language Model (LLM) using a community knowledge vector store (this is part of ongoing work).

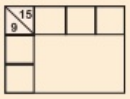
Using the community knowledge corpus, we have contrasted the differences between the community worldview and the conventional worldview. This is done by analysing the semantic neighbourhood for various relevant keywords like 'health', 'development', 'education', and so on between the colloquial knowledge corpus, and a mainstream corpus based on news reports."

To ensure inclusivity, the team integrated a 'transliteration' option, allowing users to type in English scripts, and the results will be converted to Kannada script to ensure that even individuals with low literacy levels can benefit from this technology.

mybangaloremirror@timesgroup.com
facebook.com/theBangaloremirror
@BangaloreMirror

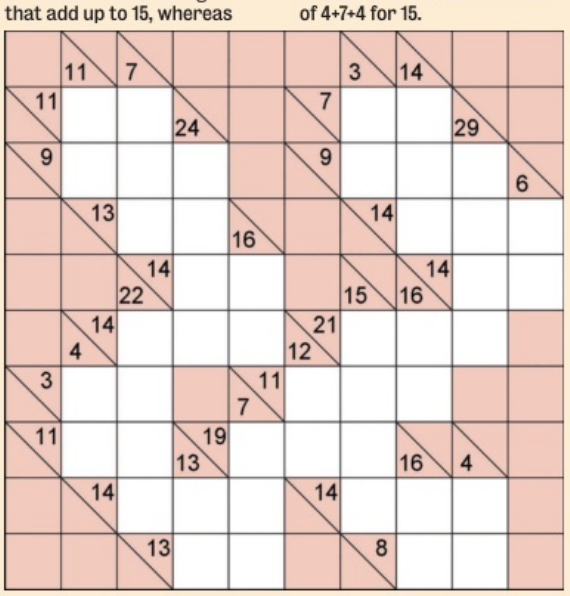
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

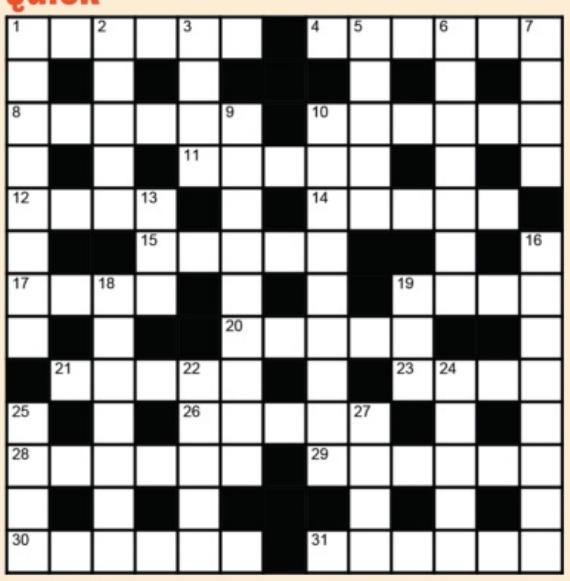


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Collapse (4,2)
4 Concurs or complies with (6)
8 Bees drink it (6)
10 Marsh or bog? (6)
11 Wharves (5)
12 Venomous South African viper (4)
14 Proofer's notations (5)
15 Artist ___ Picasso (5)
17 They could be black, green or iced (4)
19 Break in half (4)
20 Lees, leftovers (5)
21 Bone prefix (5)
23 Water-jug (4)
26 Land south of Egypt (5)
28 Refrain, abstain or halt (6)
29 Dog's house (6)
30 Not winning (6)
31 ___ the course : endured struggle, etc. to the end? (6)

DOWN

1 A member of a religious group living together (8)
2 Clergyman (5)
3 Basra's country (4)
5 Spectre (5)
6 A bodily protein – "in least" anagram? (7)
7 Neither good nor bad (2-2)
9 Erased or obliterated (6,3)
10 Popular dessert in Karnataka and the rest of the country as well (6,3)
13 Family doctors in short? (3)
16 Scintillated (8)
18 Helps (7)
19 Compass direction (3)
22 City of the Ruhr (5)
24 Breezy (5)
25 One much admired (4)
27 Well-ordered (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: B EQUALS H

BI SBK SDVV PKF AIXOKP DO X TDHKF; BI SBK WXPPKF DO X ZKKV; XPM BI SBK MXAIO PKF DO X OVXGI.

Linemaro

I find you intriguing

Mindchow

God's grace is available to all, but you must know how to tap it

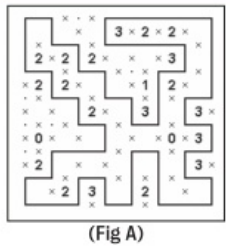
Joke of the day

I needed a password with eight characters, so I picked Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

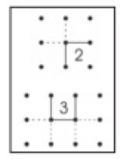
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

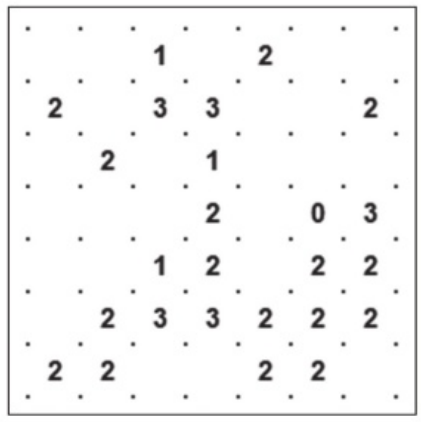


(Fig B) Not Allowed

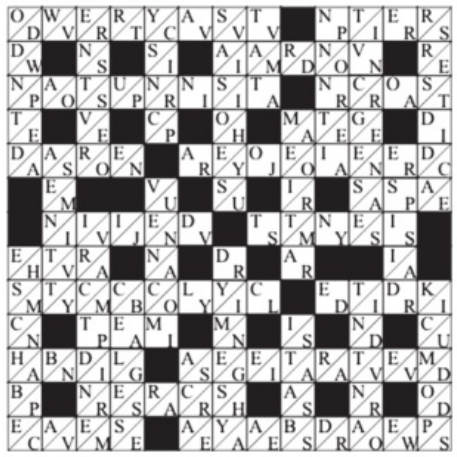
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				
8				
9				H

ACROSS

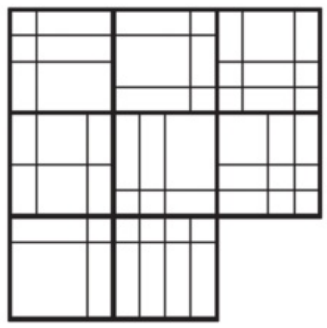
1 All BS; 6 A wait;
7 Laban; 8 A sari;
9 Chela

DOWN

1 Laban; 2 A wear;
3 Abila; 4 I call;
5 SS Hat

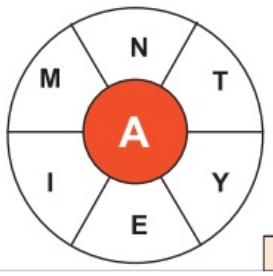
Mensapuzzle

Which is the missing tile?



A B C D E

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

11 Average; **13** Good; **15** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

1					2		6	
		9	8			7		
6			3	1				
	4	6	1	9				
		8				4		
				7	6	1	3	
				5	4			9
		4			7	8		
	7		6					2

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 15

2 2 5 6

Medium = 11

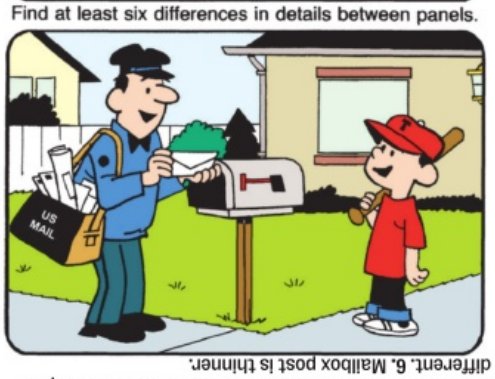
1 3 7 8

Hard = 16

3 5 7 4

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



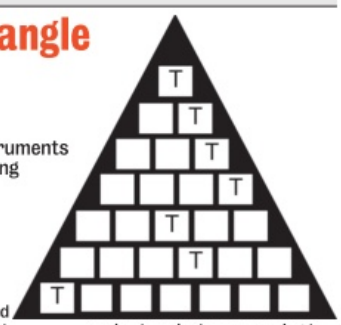
Differences: 1. Bat is shorter. **2.** Mailbox flag is different. **3.** Bush is smaller. **4.** Line in sidewalk is moved. **5.** Cap is different. **6.** Mailbox post is thinner.

Riddler

Find a short hidden message in the list of words below. carrot fiasco nephew spring rabbit; sonata tailor bureau legacy corona; travel bikini object happen soften; picnic option waited effigy adverb; report accuse animal shriek esteem oyster

Alpha triangle

1 20th letter
2 tu Brute ...
3 Become firm
4 Cooking fat
5 Old stringed instruments
6 Delicate in meaning
7 Falls over

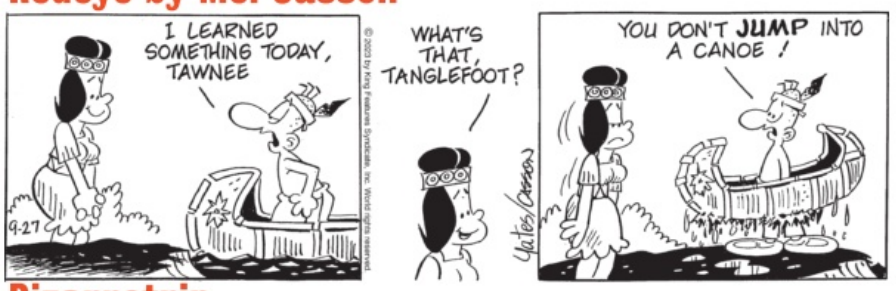


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Redeye by Mel Casson



Bizarrotrip

What did you do in life?
Oh, I'm not a ghost, just a lousy pizza tosser.
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Wayno & Piraro
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Diamond Lil

I GREW UP IN A REALLY ROUGH NEIGHBORHOOD
HOW ROUGH WAS IT?
THE AVON LADY PACKED HEAT
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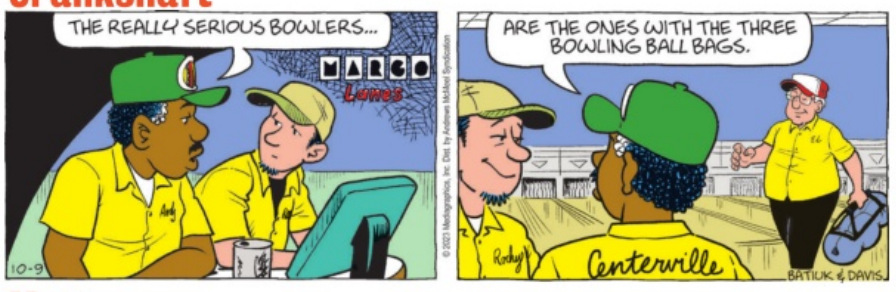
Hart of the city

I WANT TEAM YELLOW TO WIN.
TEAM YELLOW?? THE SIXTH GRADERS? THEY NEVER WIN!
I CAN'T HELP BUT ROOT FOR THE UNDERDOGS. THEY WERE FIFTH GRADERS LIKE US ONCE!
TECHNICALLY, THE SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADERS WERE FIFTH GRADERS ONCE, TOO.
DEAN, YOU'RE MISSING THE POINT!
FLASHBACK CONT.

Crankshaft



Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today you may be busy at work, but with the help of your strong network, you may be able to implement your plans successfully. Your wisdom may help you gain profits from past investments. You may enjoy your romantic moments with your spouse, which will increase harmony in your domestic life. Love birds may enjoy their happy moments.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today, you may make decisions very quickly, which may have benefits in your day-to-day life. You may also plan for higher studies to groom your career. Kids may also make you busy. Property-related disputes between siblings are likely to be resolved. You may also expect some work-related short trips.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today is not good. You may feel unhappy, or you may be dissatisfied with your current situation. You are advised to keep your patience and not take any decisions in a hurry. You are advised to take care of your parents.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today, you are blessed by the moon. The last couple of days of disappointment may now be converted into happiness. You may enjoy your professional and personal life, and your network may help you complete your postponed projects. You are likely to start some new venture with the help of your siblings, and your network may support you in every step.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today, you are advised to control your straightforwardness; your loose talk may affect people around you. You may spend your hard-earned money on buying some worthless stuff. Your mind is likely to work very fast; it is advised to make any important decision with patience.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, you may be able to complete difficult tasks very easily, which may boost your confidence level. Your past investments may have yielded good gains. You are advised to avoid arguments on worthless topics; it may waste your precious time.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today, you may feel dull. You may have some health issues. You are advised to postpone making investments in the business. It is also advised not to start a new venture. You are likely to face losses in the business. Your gains are likely to be converted into losses.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today you are blessed by the moon, which may make you happy. The last day's crunch is now over. With the help of blessings, you may get reciprocation for your hard work. With the help of your subordinates, you may be able to initiate your postponed work. There are some gains in your business that may boost your finances.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today, you may be more enthusiastic. Your performance at work may be good, it may boost your terms with seniors, and you are likely to get some new responsibilities in terms of promotions. In legal matters, you may hear good news. Your opponents and hidden enemies may be under control.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today, your destiny may help you achieve success in an easy way. You are likely to visit some religious place to seek peace in your mind. You may spend your time earning some intellectual or occult knowledge. Students are likely to do better. Singles are likely to find a good match. Lovebirds may make some important decisions in terms of marriage.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today you may feel dull, you may have some health issues, and old debts may make you upset. You will be a victim of self-criticism. You will also feel guilty for silly mistakes. It is advised to avoid adventure tours and rash driving. Your stubbornness may create some issues in your personal life.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today, you will be happy. You may feel peace in your mind. Your focus on your goals would be very good. You are likely to have a romantic moment with your spouse. Your bonding with your spouse may be stronger now. You will also be busy with other domestic issues.

KIDZONE

Harini B L, 9 Years, Kenneth Geroge Englis School

Harish K, 12 Years, Indiranagar Cambridge School

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

RIDDLER Starting with the first two words, take the first and last letters, reading from left to right. Example: Carrot flasco "from these pairs" the message is as follows: CONGRATULATIONS CODE BREAKER

QUOTE UNCODE
He who will not reason is a bigot; he who cannot is a fool; and he who dares not is a slave.

BULL'S EYE
AMENITY, amity, amit, enmity, main, men, yeti mine, mint, tiny, mite, time, tine, inmate, item, mite

FAST FIVE

B	A	L	L	S
A	W	A	I	T
N	A	B	L	A
A	R	I	A	S
L	E	A	C	H

STRIKE OUT

O	V	E	R	C	A	S	T		P	I	E	R		
W		N		I		A	R	O	N		E			
N	A	T	U	R	I	S	T		N	C	O	S		
	E		C		H		A	T	E		I			
D	A	R	E		R	E	J	O	I	N	E	D		
M			V		S		R	S	S		S			
I	V	I	E	D		S	T	Y	E	S				
E	T	A		N	D		A			K				
S	Y	M	B	O	L	I	C		D	I	R	K		
C		P	A	M		N		S		N		U		
A	N	I	L		A	G	I	T	A	T	E	D		
P		R		E		A		R				O		
E	V	E	S		E	Y	E	B	R	O	W	S		

QUICK

L	O	S	I	N	G		S	T	A	Y	E	D		
O		T		E		A		D		E				
D	E	S	I	S	T		K	E	N	N	E	L		
I		I		S	U	D	A	N		I		K		
O	S	T	E	O		P		E	W	E	R			
E		S		D	R	E	G	S				A		
T	E	A	S		E	R		S	N	A	P			
I		P	A	B	L	O		I				S		
B	E	R	G		B		S	T	E	T	S			
O		A		O	U	A	V	S		S		O		
N	E	C	T	A	R		M	O	R	A	S	S		
E		I		R		H		L				O		
C	A	V	E	I	N		A	G	R	E	E	S		

MENSA PUZZLE
E: looking across and down, lines are carried forward from the first two squares to the final square, except where two lines appear in the same position in the first two squares, in which case they are cancelled out

SOLVE IN 1M
= 216÷12(2)-8-7+5+4
= 18(2)-15+9
= 36+9-15 = 30

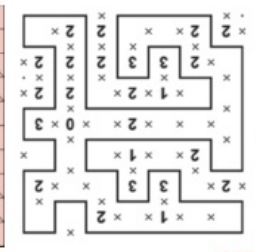
SUDOKU

1	8	3	7	4	2	9	6	5
4	2	9	8	6	5	7	1	3
6	5	7	3	1	9	2	8	4
3	4	6	1	9	8	5	2	7
7	1	8	5	2	3	4	9	6
5	9	2	4	7	6	1	3	8
8	3	1	2	5	4	6	7	9
2	6	4	9	3	7	8	5	1
9	7	5	6	8	1	3	4	2

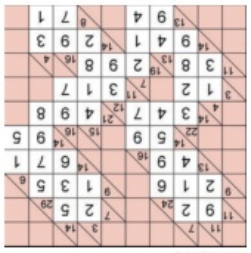
ALPHA TRIANGLE
T, Et, Set, Suet, Lutes, Subtle, Tumbles.

GO FIGURE
Easy
5 + 6 + 2 + 2 = 15
Medium
8 – 3 – 1 + 7 = 11
Hard
7 – 3 x 5 – 4 = 16

LOOP



KAKURO



Volume No 16, Issue No 32 RNI NO:KARENG/2007/22411 Published for the Proprietors, Metropolitan Media Company Ltd by R.J. Prakashan at No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011 and printed by him at Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., The Times of India Press, No. 9/10/11-A, 4th Main, KIADB Bommasandra Industrial Area, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore – 560 099 (Phones : Press : 080-22899999; Editorial : 080-40877666, Fax – 40877545, Registered Office: No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru – 560 011, Email : mybangaloremirror@timesgroup.com Editor : Ms. Seena Menon – responsible for selection of news under PRB Act. © Reproduction in whole or in part without the written permission of the Publisher is prohibited.

 # Hannibal look
'Might try it someday in real life', says Kajol as she shares AI-generated photos of herself as 'Hannibal'

Space for exploration

Actress Sneha Singh Sisodia, known for her roles in 'Meri Chidiya', 'Chashmish', and 'Operation Mayfair', has opened up on why she prefers to work in the South film industry, saying it allows her to explore the core aspects of acting and offers roles that align with her preferences.

Having worked in Hindi and South Film Industries, Sneha is currently engaged in various projects down south. Her upcoming film, 'Dakshina', set for a 2024 release, features her as the lead IPS officer. Additionally, she will be part of a comedy movie with Vennela Kishore and Harsh Vardhan, as well as a film with Nikhil Siddhartha under Ram Charan Productions. Sneha recently shared insights into her experiences in both industries, her preferences, and discussed her series 'Oh My Wife'.

When asked about her preferred industry if she were given a choice, Sneha responded: "Without a second thought, I prefer the South film industry. It allows me to explore the core aspects of acting and offers roles that align with my preferences. I'm getting the kinds of roles and content that I've always wanted to do. It's giving me opportunities to learn, explore, and build myself as an actor." "On the other hand, in the Hindi Film Industry, I haven't received any fulfilling offers yet despite my efforts. The roles I'm being offered are not very satisfying. Moreover, to reach a good director, one has to get through many middlemen, like the casting directors. The entire process is tedious, and there's groupism that often overshadows talent."

Reflecting on the differences in working patterns of both South and Hindi industry, Sneha said: "The South Film industry has an excellent technical team, they always do things ethically. They are particular about time and are very punctual. Directors down South, give actors the chance to perform freely and ensure that they get into the details of their characters." **IANS**

Urban chic

Kusha Kapila speaks about a new kind of role for her

Actress Kusha Kapila, who plays Chhaya in the coming-of-age drama series 'Dehati Ladke', shared how she has mostly essayed extremely urban characters, and in this show, she has played a professor unlike her previous roles.

The social media personality and YouTuber, Kusha is known for her roles in 'Selfiee', 'Plan A Plan B', 'Thank You for Coming', 'Case Toh Banta Hai', and others.

Speaking about her role in 'Dehati Ladke', she shared: "Chhaya is a liberal and progressive woman, who is an Assistant Professor at Rajat's university. She finds love in Rajat's mentor, Prashant. Chhaya has a mind of her own; she is a strong-headed yet amicable person, and people find it easy to open up to her. Besides being progressive, she is also unafraid to make mistakes in life."

Talking about taking up a role unlike any other she has played in the past, Kusha said: "Interestingly, my character in 'Dehati Ladke' is unlike any other roles that I have done in the past. I have mostly essayed extremely urban characters. I've never really played a professor, especially somebody who quotes poets and imparts wisdom at the drop of a hat. So, that was very interesting."

Based on a best-selling Hindi novel, the narrative not only evokes a sense of nostalgia for college days, but also imparts valuable life lessons about embracing life to the fullest. The series follows the journey of Rajat, a simple boy from a small village, who embarks on a quest to chase his dreams in the glare of Lucknow city.

This young adult series features Shine Pandey, Raghav Sharma, Tanish Neeraj, Saamya Jainn, Aasif Khan, and Kusha. **-IANS**

Rebel memoir coming up

American actor and comedian Rebel Wilson spoke about the "gut-wrenching" process of writing her book 'Rebel Rising', which will be released on April 2. She also showed a behind-the-scenes video of herself signing books, according to People.

In the Instagram story clip, Wilson autographed printed pages from her book as she narrated the video. "This is how I'm spending my nights of my holidays," she said. "Just another few thousand to go for the first people that buy the book."

"You guys, I mean, I can't wait for you to read this," she continued of her memoir. "You're going to see a whole new side of me. Lots of funny stuff and serious stuff... And hopefully, you guys will love the book as much as I've loved writing it--although sometimes it's been gut-wrenching and emotional."

"Four thousand more to go. Let's go," Wilson added.

'Rebel Rising' follows Wilson's success in Hollywood and her personal issues. **ANI**

Wholesome family entertainer

KAATERA (KANNADA)
4.0 RATING ★★★★★
- **DIRECTOR** Tharun Kishore Sudhir
- **ACTORS** Darshan, Aradhana Ram, Jagapathi Babu, Kumar Govind, Shruthi, Biradar, Avinash, Shwetha Prasad, Vinod Kumar Alva, Padma Vasanthi, Achyuth Kumar, Sardar Sathya, and Ravi Chethan.
- **Duration** 182 minutes
- **Certification** UA

This is actor-cum-writer-cum-director Tharun Kishore Sudhir's third movie and he deserves a pat on the back for handling the megaphone with aplomb. The script writers – Tharun Kishore Sudhir and Jadeshaa K Hampi – have taken care to include in the film several issues such as land reforms, zamindar system, ill-effects of caste system, untouchability, and the importance of treating all people irrespective of their caste or creed. The specialty of the script is that it not only conveys the much-needed message against the discrimination of people but also accommodates high-octane action scenes that are a treat for Darshan's fans.

The movie opens with Kasaba police inspector (Sardar Sathya) providing security to a woman officer from a forensic laboratory at the spot where 107 skeletons were found. It is said the police department has assigned the woman officer (Shwetha Prasad) to verify if the deaths of 107 people are natural or due to a genocide.

Meanwhile, the scene shifts to Bheemanahalli where the villagers are seen contributing money to engage an advocate to get bail for Kaatera (Darshan) who is languishing in a prison. Mahadeva (Kumar Govind) and his friend succeed in convincing an advocate to argue on behalf of Kaatera. The court grants a 10-day parole to him. The prisons department assigns a police head constable (Achyuth Kumar) to accompany Kaatera. Kaatera's enemies engage goons to eliminate him, but they fail. The police head constable asks Kaatera to tell him about his background. Kaatera tells his story to the police head constable about how the people of Bheemanahalli were exploited by two zamindars Devaraya (Jagapathi Babu) and Kaale Gowda and how he fell in love with Prabhavathi (Aradhana Ram), the daughter of village shanbhogue and how she was killed by her own brother for falling in love with him. What happens to Kaatera after reaching his village is what the movie is all about.

As far as the performance of the actors is concerned, Challenging Star Darshan walks away with all honours for his sterling performance. His punchy dialogues and smashing performance in action scenes are a treat for mass audiences. The dialogues on caste and creed and on the need to give importance to human beings are meaningful. Aradhana Ram, the daughter of Malashri who makes debut as a heroine with this movie, has acted well. Her dancing skills deserve appreciation. It is nice to see Kumar Govind on the screen after a long gap. Shruthi, Padma Vasanthi, Shwetha Prasad, and Achyuth Kumar provide good support. Biradar, a mute person, who wants to play Hiranyakashipu in a play, has acted well. Jagapathi Babu and Vinod Kumar Alva are convincing villains who go to any extent to exploit farmers.

The only drawback of the movie is its running time. It could have easily been reduced to two-and-half hours. The pre-intermission session is full of romance and sentiments while the post-intermission is full of action.

It is worth a watch by all and a must for Darshan's fans.

-Y Maheswara Reddy